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State Dept. review completed

Soviets Praise "Identical Ideology" in Broadcast to Yugoslavia

A Radio Moscow commentary broadcast to Yugoslavia in late December included the highly unusual claim that Soviet-Yugoslav cooperation "is based on identical ideology." This seemingly unqualified Soviet acceptance of Yugoslavia's unique brand of socialism is puzzling, even in view of the unusual friendliness demonstrated during the Tito-Brezhnev talks in Kiev last November.

The impact of the broadcast in Yugoslavia is not known, but it could be negative. Party leaders there have taken pains to portray the rapprochement with Moscow as a function of Soviet acceptance of well-known differences. The allegation of "identity" in ideological views could, however, pose questions about the actual content of Tito-Brezhnev discussions. At minimum, the broadcast will disturb top-level party leaders in Belgrade, because it conflicts with the Yugoslavs' official line.

The commentary's overall message is that relations between the two countries are improving in every field, including party relations. The Soviet broadcast also highlighted agreement on major international issues, like Vietnam and the Middle East, and it included some kind words for Yugoslavia's nonaligned role.

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Student Protest Fizzles as Regime Cracks Down

According to Monday's Borba, the Zagreb University branch of the Yugoslav Students Organization will be disbanded and replaced by a new group that will function as part of the Zagreb Youth Organization. Membership will be restricted by statute to those displaying "proper activity and socialist determination." The move is an obvious reaction to the Zagreb students' support for their counterparts in the philosophical faculty at Belgrade University, who are trying to prevent the imminent purge of eight leftist professors.

The US Embassy reports that some professors have complained of turmoil at the philosophy faculty. Rumors are circulating that the faculty is being pressured to capitulate on "getting rid" of the maverick professors or face dissolution and reconstitution by the Serbian parliament. Meantime, overt student support is weakening and a rumored faculty walkout is increasingly unlikely. The professors could be sacked during

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the semester break between mid-January to mid-February, when most students will have left the university.

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Polish-US Relations: Good Prospects + Good Luck = A Good Year

Fleshing out its year-end assessment of ties

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[REDACTED] Embassy Warsaw notes that the church-state duel continues in Poland, with possible important consequences for the US. As seen by the Embassy, the strategy of the regime is to establish relations with the Vatican in order to outmaneuver the church--and very possibly to prepare for a successful visit by Gierek to the US this year. Fully experienced in this long-running game, the Polish church is pressing for concessions from the regime as its entry price into Rome.

In addition to a Washington visit, Gierek may well make it to Bonn and Bucharest during the first half of the year. Warsaw is likely to concentrate on an agreement with West Germany, but loyalty to Moscow will remain the guiding light on the near horizon.

A portion of Poland's initiative to the West will be based on the regime's commitment to a greater supply of consumer goods. With the pressure on in this regard, opportunities remain very strong for Western investors. In turn, Gierek--already heavily committed to the Polish coal mining industry and a former miner himself--stands ready to deliver this precious energy resource to the West.

Although not a charismatic figure, Gierek clearly commands the respect of his country. Over the coming year, he likely will continue to strengthen and consolidate his political control.

Finally, one possible debit recurs. If Moscow pursues a program of tightening up on cultural policy as a bond against the "excesses of detente," Polish liberalization efforts may be set back. Yet, Western influence in Poland remains strong, with the US in position to remain a major contributor.

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